

Quick Tips

- Need royalty-free music for an iMovie project? Find a song that's in the public domain and ask your music teacher to recommend a student (or students) who can perform and record it for you.
- Create a database of the books your students have read, including a field where students rate the book. Refer kids to this database when they are looking for a good read.
- Shoot some silent video footage of two hand puppets "talking" to each other. Import it into iMovie and have students write dialog for the puppets and record it as a voiceover.

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Leapin' February

Thirty days hath September and the rest we can't remember. But we do remember that there's something in that poem about February and leap years. Since 2004 is a leap year, let's forget about groundhogs, Mardi Gras, presidents and valentines. Let's save all our celebrating for Leap Day on February 29, 2004.

If you and your students want to know more about Leap Day, visit Leapzine at <http://www.leapzine.com>. We love Leap Day because it gives us one extra day to work on the March issue of *MLTI Update*. If you'd like to help us out, take a moment out of your Leap Day celebration and send us a story about what's happening in your classroom. Contact information can be found on page 4 of this newsletter, or you can go to *MaineLearns*, click on **Contact Us**, and fill out the form.

Professional Development Opportunities

Our second round of Content Meetings for this school year has begun and we're pleased with the positive response we've received to the new format. As we explained in the last issue of *MLTI Update*, we are combining content areas this time and offering two Humanities sessions and two Math/Science sessions in each region. If you haven't registered yet, please visit <http://www.state.me.us/mlti/events/2004Mtg.htm>. If you missed the meetings in your region and are willing to travel a little farther, please feel free to register for meetings in a neighboring region.

We are also pleased to announce the *Assessment for Learning Specialists Institutes* led by Dr. Anne Davies. There will be a two-day institute on March 15 and 16 with a follow up next October. These institutes are designed for middle level educators who have some prior experience with assessment for learning and who would like to learn more about facilitating conversations about assessment with their colleagues. Anne will be using the materials on the CD that she has made available to all middle schools in Maine.

Another valuable professional development opportunity is the *Facilitation Skill Development* workshop with Bruce Wellman on March 9 and 10. The purpose of this workshop is to help middle school teachers and administrators become highly-skilled facilitators who can lead group discussions around data-driven decision making. See *MaineLearns* for more details.

Promise of Place Conference

The 2nd Promise of Place Conference will be held March 25-27 at the Bethel Inn. This is a regional conference presented by the Northern Forest Center and the Center for Place-based learning and Innovation.

The goals of the conference are “to link place-based educators and community members into a place-based education network for on-going collaboration and support; to strengthen our

shared vision for the promotion of place-based education through the presentation of current work and philosophies; to build knowledge and skills through concrete ideas and experiences; and to develop ideas for collectively realizing the promise of place-based education in the Northern Forest Region and beyond.”

For more information, download the brochure from *MaineLearns* or visit <http://www.northernforest.org/events.htm>.



Click on Professional Development

Healthy Computing

We've all done a lot of thinking about how laptops in the classroom affect our teaching and learning but it may be time for us to start thinking about how it might be affecting our health and the health of our students.

John Robbins of Technology Integrators & Collaborators has done some research about laptop ergonomics and has posted resources at <http://www.technologyintegrators.org/healthycomputing.html>

John's PowerPoint presentation can give you a good overview of laptop ergonomics and points we should consider as we examine our

classroom practices and computing behaviors.

John's site also has links to some great resources for teachers who want to become more knowledgeable about healthy computing practices or who are looking for laptop furniture for home or the classroom.

This is a valuable site to share with your colleagues and with parents who may be concerned about healthy computing at home. For more information, contact John at tic@technologyintegrators.org.



Click on Educator Assistants – Across the Curriculum

iBooks for Library Media Specialists

This month, MLTI laptops are being distributed to middle school Library Media Specialists across the state. This is good news for middle school teachers and students who rely on their school librarians to guide them in their research.

In the words of Sylvia Norton, MDOE and MSL School Library/Technology Planning Coordinator, “Library media specialists were



often the original technology innovators in their school buildings as they used audio-visual equipment and computers as tools to access, organize, and use information in all curricula areas. The Maine Association of School Libraries was an early supporter of the Maine Learning Technology Initiative and testified in favor of the project.”

Now Library Media Specialists have the tools they need to help students retrieve, analyze, and synthesize information. For more information, read the article on *MaineLearns* or contact Sylvia Norton at sylvia.k.norton@maine.gov



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Skowhegan Area Middle School

Occasionally we like to feature a school where teachers and students are using their iBooks in creative and innovative ways to facilitate learning. Skowhegan Area Middle School is one of those schools.

Laura Richter, Technology Integration Specialist and RIM for the Kennebec region has created a web site that showcases the work teachers and students are doing in her building. Her *Meaningful Technology Integration* site at

<http://www.msad54.k12.me.us/MSAD54Pages/SAMS/SamsTechnology/tech.html> includes curriculum and teacher resources as well as descriptions of projects and samples of student work.

We have featured two of those projects, "The Day I Was Born" and the Submarine project, in our "What Works" section of *MaineLearns* as examples of how MLTI combined with creative and innovative teachers has made a difference in middle school classrooms.



[Click on What Works](#)

EarthWatch Sends Maine Educators to Brazil

On Thursday, February 12th, four Maine teachers will head to Brazil for an eleven-day



scientific expedition in the Pantanal. They will join a group of teachers and scientists from Brazil and the United States on an EarthWatch sponsored mission to this unique South American wildlife area.

The Maine teachers are Tabby Dionne from the Whittier Middle School in Poland, Tom Light from Buckfield Middle School, Martha Rogers from Penobscot Valley High School and Jeff Wilford from York Middle School. They will join a research team trying to better understand and protect this special place.

We will be posting daily journals and photos from these teachers on *MaineLearns* so we can share in the adventure and learn more about the Pantanal.



[Click on Featured Profile](#)

New Crop of SEED Developers

Our friends at SEED recently announced that 50 Maine teachers will receive a total of \$70,000 in awards for developing 35 innovative, technology-rich projects.

These projects are units that are aligned with the Maine Learning Results and that the teachers have already taught and proven effective. The teachers will also be offered free professional development opportunities as they ready their projects for publication on the SEED web site this spring.



Projects from the past two rounds of Developer Awards are archived on the SEED web site at <http://seed.mainecenter.org>. Many MLTI teachers visit these archives regularly, looking for new ideas they can use in their classrooms. We look forward to seeing the new Developer projects this spring.

You can find a complete list of the winners for this round and their project titles on *MaineLearns* or at the SEED web site.



[Click on Community](#)

MLTI Update

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by the MLTI Staff

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Read MLTI Update online!

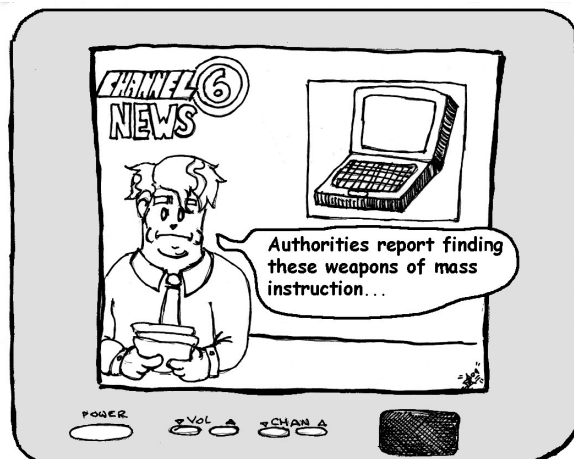
<http://www.mainelearns.org>



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Kudos to...

... **Glen Nerbak** of Lyman Moore Middle School in Portland and his 7th graders for their participation in the *We the People: Project Citizen* program. The students are using their iBooks to communicate by email, publish documents and prepare presentations.



Quote of the Month

"The secret of effective research with new electronic information sources is the use of powerful questioning strategies. In fact, questions may be one of the most powerful technologies invented by humans. Even though they require no batteries and need not be plugged into the wall, they are the tools which help us make up our minds, solve problems, and make decisions."

Jamie McKenzie

McKenzie, Jamie. "Telling Questions and the Search for Insight." 10 Feb 2004. <http://www.fno.org/sept97/telling.html> .

Barbara's and Kelly's Favorites

Here are **Kelly's** favorites for February:

Kelly's first favorite is *Project Interactivate* <http://www.shodor.org/interactivate/>. A favorite at the Math Content meetings, this site abounds in interactive, on-line resources that can be utilized in most math and science classrooms. Once at the site, head to the activities where you will not only find the interactive applets, but also the *What?* (explains the purpose of the activity), the *Why?* (why it is useful) and the *How?* (how to use it with your students). This is an incredibly valuable site.

Check out *Developing Student Electronic Portfolios*

<http://members.shaw.ca/dbrear/dseportfolios.html>

Tired of trying to get your students to keep track of loose papers and large notebooks? Maybe digitizing portfolios is the answer for you. This is a great site with links to many resources (including Dr. Helen Barrett's site, one of my previous favorites) on developing electronic portfolios. It isn't the "thing of the future". The electronic portfolio is the "thing of now"!

Next Month: Barbara's Favorites.